



— 1937 —

LAUNCESTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER.

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Mr.Chairman & Gentlemen,

I beg to present my Report for
1937:-

SECTION A.- Statistics & Social conditions.

TABLE I.

Population	6,408
Area	73,187 acres
No. of inhabited houses	1,852
Product of Penny Rate	£65.17.10
Parishes	17
Chief Industry	Agriculture

TABLE II.

Vital Statistics.

	<u>Total.</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>Rate per</u> <u>1000.</u>	<u>England</u> <u>& Wales</u>
<u>LIVE BIRTHS:-</u>	83	39	44	12.9	14.9
Legitimate		36	40)		
Illegitimate		3	4)		
<u>STILL-BIRTHS:-</u>	4	3	1	.62	.6
Legitimate		3	1)		
Illegitimate		-	-)		
<u>DEATHS:-</u>	86	51	35	10.73 (adjusted)	12.4

Natural decrease = 3.

<u>Deaths under</u> <u>one year:-</u>	1	-	1	11.7	58.
<u>Maternal mortality</u>	-	-	-	Nil	3.23
<u>Influenza Death</u> <u>Rate:-</u>	10	5	5	1.5	.45

TABLE III.

This Table shows the causes of the
86 deaths as classified by the Registrar
General.

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>
<u>Deaths from all causes:-</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>35</u>
Other Digestive diseases	2	-
Acute & Chronic Nephritis	5	2
Congenital debility etc.	-	1
Senility	3	1
Suicide	2	-
Other violence	1	3
Other Defined Diseases	3	3
Cerebral Haemorrhage	1	1
Heart disease	11	11
Other circulatory diseases	3	1
Bronchitis	1	-
Pneumonia (all forms)	3	-
Other respiratory	2	1
Appendicitis	1	-
Influenza	5	5
Tubercle (respiratory)	1	1
Cancer	7	5

There was an outbreak of Influenza in the early months of 1937 causing 10 deaths.

There were 2 deaths from Tubercle as against one in 1936.

The deaths from Cancer have decreased from 14 to 12 this year.

This year there is unfortunately a natural decrease in the population of 3, also it will be noted that the estimated population for 1937 has fallen by 137 people.

The infant mortality is extremely low this year - one death under 1 year - and that one being due to prematurity.

There was only one notification for Puerperal Fever this year and no deaths.

	<u>Launceston R.D.</u>	<u>England & Wales</u>
<u>Death rate per 1,000:-</u>		
Measles	Nil	.02
Whooping Cough	Nil	.04
Enteritis & Infantile Diarrhoea	Nil	5.8

THE STATE

OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA

CHAPTER I

ARTICLE I

SECTION 1

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and when elected shall have been seven Years a Citizen of the State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including all bound Persons, except Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons.

The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and in every subsequent Year as near thereto as Congress shall by Law direct: and the Ratio of Representation shall be fixed by that Legislature in the first Enumeration after the Year 1800.

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TABLE IV.

SANITARY SECTION.

Sanitary Inspector's Report.

To the Chairman & Members of the
Launceston Rural District Council.

Gentlemen,

I beg to submit for your consideration the Annual Report and Summary of Work carried out during the year 1937.

In July Dr. N. R. Beattie, one of the Medical Officers at the Ministry of Health, was in the District for several days, during which time he carried out an extensive survey of the Council's Public Health services. Dr. Beattie's report was received after the period covered in this Report, and has since been placed before the Council for their consideration. I trust the Council will make an early start on acting upon the suggestions contained therein.

HOUSING.

During the year two important steps have been taken with regard to housing. The first was the completion of the first general survey of working-class properties that has ever been carried out in the District. In order to help me in this work the Council engaged a temporary Assistant for six months.

The second important step was the adoption of the Housing (Rural Workers') Acts.

712 properties were inspected during the survey and complete details of all Cottages are recorded and filed in my office. Of the properties inspected, 476 are not in all respects fit for habitation, although, in many cases, the repairs needed are of quite a minor nature - frequently the lack of a drain for the disposal of slop water, or no concrete floor for pail closets. In a large number of cases the most serious defect was dampness. This dampness is usually caused by the lack of dampcourses, or the fact that many Cottages are built with their backs against a bank of earth. The latter defect can usually be remedied by having a dry area built at the rear and side of the Cottage.

Such a large number of Cottages cannot be dealt with immediately, in fact, some years must elapse before every Cottage is dealt with.

One of the greatest stumbling blocks to quick re-conditioning of Cottages is the lack of masons in this Rural District. Local builders are not keen on going several miles into the country to attend to small repair jobs at Cottages; therefore, in the majority of cases the work is let to village masons and carpenters who have their hands more than full. I know of several cases where property owners have given orders for repairs, only to be kept waiting weeks before the work can receive attention.

The difficulty of obtaining labour for small repair work will be more readily realised when it is remembered that for the erection of three Council houses on an ideal building site at Altarnun only one tender was received.

Housing (Rural Workers') Acts.

The Council is to be congratulated upon adopting this Act early in the year; and it is to be hoped that property owners will avail themselves of the generous benefits offered.

The response in the first year has been poor, only five applications being made. Of these the Housing Committee refused one application, at Lewannick, as it would not comply with the Building Bye-Laws regarding air space, but offered the maximum grant of £100 in the four other cases.

At the time of writing this Report the maximum grant of £100 has been offered in the case of ten properties.

The Council have adopted a good standard, of which the following are the chief points:-

- (1) Three bedrooms (wherever possible).
- (2) All rooms at least 7 feet high.
- (3) Glass window area at least one-tenth of floor area, and at least one half to open.
- (4) Through ventilation.
- (5) Ventilated Larder.
- (6) Trough and draining board in Scullery.
- (7) Furnace and copper for washing purposes.
- (8) Satisfactory water supply and drainage.

It is to be hoped that individual Councillors will use their influence to persuade friends to, at any rate consider, the advantages of re-conditioning their agricultural Cottages under this Act - any help which I can offer landlords in this direction will be given most readily.

In my opinion, the proper Authority to have adopted this Act would have been the Cornwall County Council, and by not doing so in 1926, or even later, they missed a golden opportunity of improving the lot of the agricultural worker in the County.

Old Houses.

A Clearance Order consisting of five properties in the Village of Altarnun was confirmed after an Inquiry. Some delay was experienced in obtaining a suitable building site, but by the end of the year the Ministry had approved the plans for three Council houses and tenders had been invited.

Following a Notice under Section 19 of the Housing Act 1920, a Cottage at North Tregear, Tresmeer, was closed for habitation; and undertakings not to re-let two properties at Trecrogo Lane, South Petherwin, were accepted. An old wooden shed in Trevallett Wood was pulled down and burnt following notice from the Council.

A Cottage at Tregune, Altarnun, has been voluntarily closed by the Owner.

Overcrowding.

Of the 19 cases found as a result of the overcrowding survey 11 have been abated as follows:-

Left and gone to larger Cottages	6
Lodgers left	1
Arrangements made for sleeping out	3
House enlarged	1
Proposed to enlarge house	1

New Houses.

Plans for 12 houses have been approved but at the end of the year only 3 had been completed.

MILK SUPPLY.

There are 543 Cowkeepers on the Register and 130 remain registered as Retailers although few actually do any retailing of milk. These figures are most misleading and the Register needs bringing up to date. Many producers who are still on the Register are either dead or have left the District.

There is only one addition to the list of Accredited Producers, making 16 in all, and one producer of Tuberculin Tested Milk.

142 visits were made to inspect Cowsheds and Dairies and during the year 1938 it is hoped to make a complete inspection of all Cowsheds in the District. The Register will then be brought up to date, and those producers whose buildings lack suitable channels, standings etc., will be served with notices requiring them to conform to the standard laid down by the Milk & Dairies Order.

In a District such as this, where nearly the whole of the milk produced is sent to Factories, many producers are inclined to treat milk production as a side line and not take the care they might if it was being sold on the liquid market.

Much of the milk produced comes from smallholders and cottagers who keep two or three cows in sheds or outbuildings, which, although they do not come up to the standard for light and ventilation, are generally kept in a clean condition.

To obtain a clean milk supply the method of milking must be correct. Good sheds are an asset and help to raise enthusiasm for pride in clean milking, but good sheds with poor methods will not mean clean milk production.

We have in our District many producers with fine cowsheds and excellent milking technique; many more with good buildings which are wasted because the producer is ignorant of the most elementary rules of clean milk production; and unfortunately a larger number of producers whose cowsheds are most unhygienic, with rubble floors, inefficient channels, bad drainage, poor light and ventilation and generally dirty, and, what is worse, they themselves are ignorant of clean milking methods and completely indifferent to the whole subject.

If some of those "don't care" producers (other

Districts have them as well) would only give clean milking methods a fair trial for a month, by devoting a few extra minutes each day in grooming their cows, washing the udders, rejecting the first squirt of milk from each teat (which obviously must be full of germs), keeping their hands and clothing clean, and seeing that their milking utensils have been properly sterilised, they would find something fascinating about clean milking and would have no desire to return to their old methods. They would realise that they were working under a big disadvantage with poor floors, bad channels and inefficient lighting, and for their own convenience would have these defects rectified without any pressure from the Local Authority.

One retailer, at Hick's Mill, Lewannick, was struck off the Register owing to the filthy methods of production practised at the farm. This producer was given the opportunity of improving his methods and buildings but preferred to stop selling.

MEAT INSPECTION.

There are 20 private slaughterhouses in use situated in the following Parishes:-

Altarnun	 2	North Hill	 4
Boyton	 1	St. Stephens	 2
Egloskerry	... 1	St. Thomas	 2
Laneast	 1	South Petherwin	... 1
Lewannick	 1	Stokeclimland	 3
Lezant	 1	Warbstow	 1

With slaughterhouses scattered over a wide district it is impossible to see all the meat killed; but special care is taken to pay as many visits as possible to those slaughterhouses where unsound meat is likely to be found.

At one slaughterhouse in the Parish of St. Stephens it was found that the amount of meat killed was exceeding the space available for keeping the carcasses clean. This was pointed out to the butcher who built a separate cooling room adjoining the killing house for hanging carcasses.

613 visits were made for the purpose of meat inspection and it was found necessary to condemn as unfit for food the following:-

13	Bullock carcasses & offal.
25	Sheep ditto.
2	Pig ditto.
1	Carcass of Veal.
2	Forequarters of beef.
41	Pigs' heads.
	Many diseased organs.

All the above was surrendered voluntarily and in no case was it necessary to apply for a Magistrate's Order.

WATER SUPPLIES.

No public water supplies exist in the District. It is to be hoped that during the coming year the Council will give serious consideration to the question of providing public water supplies in some of the larger Villages. When considering the provision of supplies for such Villages as South Petherwin, Lewannick, North Hill & Coads Green, Altarnun & Five Lanes, it

should be borne in mind that the provision of a water supply, to be followed later by a sewage disposal scheme, would increase appreciably the value of building land, and would be an incentive for private individuals to erect more dwellinghouses, thereby increasing the rateable value of the District.

Eleven samples of water were taken for analysis; of these four were found to be polluted, and one sample was obtained from a doubtful supply.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS.

Houses inspected	712
Visits to above	784
Houses repaired	32
Visits to houses during course of repair	87
Houses overcrowded	8
<u>Visits to:-</u>	
Slaughterhouses etc.	613
Cowsheds & Dairies	143
New Houses	31
Schools	14
Water supplies	46
Factories & Workshops	8
Shops	10
For interviews etc.	51
Complaints received	16
Nuisances abated	10
Water closets substituted for pail closets	8
Fumigations after infectious diseases .	6
Letters written	205
Informal Notices served	71
" " complied with	54
Formal Notices served	7
" " complied with	7

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

T. A. JUDD,

Sanitary Inspector.

TABLE IV. (continued)

Notification of Infectious Diseases.
(Non-Tubercular)

Scarlet Fever	-
Diphtheria	3
Pneumonia	5
Erysipelas	4
Puerperal Fever	1
Enteric Fever	2
Total:-	<u>15</u>

There were no cases of Scarlet Fever in 1937.

Diphtheria - 3 cases as against 4 in 1936.

There were two cases of Enteric Fever early in 1937, both originating from the same house in the Stokeclimsland area, where one case occurred in 1936. All precautions were taken and the patients removed. The cause of the infection was not discovered.

Tuberculosis (New Cases)

Lungs ... 3 Other Tubercle ... 2

Ratio of non-notified to total Tubercular Deaths:- Nil.

Efficiency of Notifications in the area:- Good.

The Launceston Rural District was inspected by the Ministry of Health in 1937, but no report had come through up to the end of 1937 but has since been placed before the Council. I trust the Council will see it's way to act on the suggestions in it.

I would particularly call to the notice of the Council the remarks about milk, water, and sewage, in the Sanitary Inspector's Report, with all of which I am in entire agreement.

I should like to thank Mr.Judd for his excellent work again this year.

This concludes my Report.

E. G. SAUNDERS, M.B. B.S.

Medical Officer of Health.

